

Psychology from Islamic Perspective: Contributions of Early Muslim Scholars and Challenges to Contemporary Muslim Psychologists

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ABSTRACT: Early Muslims wrote extensively about human nature and called it *Ilm-al Nafsiat* or self-knowledge. In many cases, their works seem to be the original ideas for many modern day psychological theories and practices. What is interesting however is that a lot of what the early scholars wrote was blended with Islamic philosophy and religious ideas. This paper covers major contributions of prominent early Muslim scholars to psychology and outlines the challenges faced by today's Muslims in adapting to the Western theories. It also offers a few recommendations on the indigenization of psychology for Muslim societies interested in seeking the Islamic perspective on human behaviors.

KEY WORDS: Islamic psychology; early Muslim scholars; history of psychology; Muslim psychologists; indigenous psychology.

Islam is a major world religion and there are growing numbers of Muslims in the west, particularly in North America where the Muslim population estimates range between 4 and 6 million (Haddad, 1991; Hussain and Hussain, 1996). The sharpest rise in the Muslim population has been seen in the last couple of decades and continues to grow steadily. Although the growth of Muslims is not higher compared to other ethnic or religious groups, interest in Islam and Muslims has risen significantly after the September 11th incidents in America. Besides information on Muslims from the media, the social science literature is now replete with the socio-political aspects of Arab/Muslim cultures. A meager amount of writings is also available on the psychological issues relevant for this minority community (Haque, 2004; Murken and Shah, 2002; Reich and Paloutzian, 2001). With the increase of Muslim population in

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America and interest of social scientists in this minority community, it has become imperative that the Islamic worldview on issues related to psychology is introduced in the mainstream literature. An inquiry into the intellectual tradition of Muslim beliefs about human nature and methodology of treatment would be revealing for persons in the helping professions who are likely to encounter Muslim clients in practice, teaching or research. While many Muslims are heavily influenced by the Qur'an (Muslim holy book) and sayings of Prophet Muhammad, some are also influenced by the works of early Muslim scholars who contributed in the realm of natural and social sciences. What makes such contributions unique is that they are based on Islamic philosophy or the concept of Unity of God. Knowledge of Islamic perspectives can go a long way as a part of cultural sensitivity training for mainstream clinicians and researchers. This paper explores the contributions of early Muslim scholars (universal figures) to psychology and highlights the dilemmas posed by western psychology to Muslim professionals and clients followed by some general recommendations.

The term "early" in the title of this paper denotes the first significant Muslim era after the death of Prophet Muhammad (632 AD). The rise of Islamic civilization and culture of Muslims starting from 7th century AD lasted up to the early 19th century AD. However, for purposes of brevity and also because Islamic sciences and philosophy gave way to other schools starting in the 14th century, this paper highlights Muslim contributions to psychology until the 10th century or about 400 years after Prophet's death. Early Muslim scholars wrote extensively in the area of human psychology, although, the term "psychology" did not exist at that time and such endeavors were mostly a part of philosophical writings. In the writings of Muslim scholars, the term *Nafs* (self or soul) was used to denote individual personality and the term *fitrah* for human nature. *Nafs* encompasses a broad range of topics including the *qalb* (heart), the *ruh* (spirit), the *aql* (intellect) and *irada* (will).¹ Many early Muslim scholars directly or indirectly contributed to the study of the "self".

If we examine the historical background under which Muslim scholarship developed, we will find that it arose under the umbrella of philosophy, which encompassed almost all areas of human enquiry. Philosophy, in most simplistic terms, refers to the knowledge of all things, both divine and human.² It was during the 8th and 9th centuries that Alexandria and Syria became the center of philosophy influenced mainly by the Greek thought and also to some extent by Indian and Persian thought. Al-Mamun (813–933), a caliph from the Abbassid dynasty, showed interest in getting Greek works translated into Arabic. He established a philosophical academy *Baitul Hikmah* that stimulated interest in and discussions among Muslim scholars on philosophical issues, resulting in translations of Greek philosophical works, commentaries and some original treatises in many areas of knowledge. Muslims were attracted to the field of philosophy for reasons including the Qur'anic verses that exhort man to think about existence, nature, qualities of God, and the hereafter; the *hadith*³ of the Prophet emphasizing values of knowledge⁴ and also

due to the converts who had prior attachment with philosophy. The initial efforts of Muslims to reason in order to understand the nature of things was called Kalam that led to the two major schools, i.e., Muta'zilites (rationalists)⁵ and Asharites (traditionalists or the orthodox)⁶ and many other smaller schools that are beyond the scope of our discussion. Al-Mamun of course, was a staunch supporter of the Mutazilite school that favored rationalism in all things including religion.

It is also important here to make a distinction between Muslim and Islamic philosophy as the two are not necessarily the same. The term Muslim philosophy generally refers to the works of those Muslim thinkers who were highly influenced by Greek thought whether or not they liked it. It includes metaphysics and other philosophical concepts not only of the early scholars but of different schools of thought that emerged within Islam over the years. The unique characteristic of Muslim philosophy is that it blended foreign philosophies with Islamic thought resulting in a change in the Hellenistic philosophy itself. As opposed to the Greeks who had revolted from the Christian religious dogmas, Muslims actually reconciled religion with philosophy. Muslim philosophers wrote in areas such as: (a) Relationship between religion and philosophy, (b) First Cause, (c) Proofs of God's existence, (d) Theory of Creation and Evolution, and (e) Theory of Soul. While in the beginning, Muslim philosophy concerned itself mainly with theological issues, its second phase led to the development of mysticism. In the third phase, which is characterized by philosophy proper, the Muslim scholars contributed significantly to the natural sciences as well.⁷ As far as psychology is concerned, we see the contributions of Muslim scholars at each stage, although the nature and extent of their contributions both varied and overlapped. The term Islamic philosophy is narrower in approach and draws ideas mainly from Qur'an and Hadith. It is related to the external (Shariya) aspects of the Qur'an as well as the hidden meaning (Haqiqah) of its verses. Islamic philosophy is actually an endeavor to get to this Haqiqah, which is the sole reality and the only truth as well as the ultimate goal of Islamic philosophy. It is well known that almost all early Muslim scholars including Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd against whom charges of atheism were made (because of their Aristotelian conception of the world being co-eternal) found inspiration primarily from the Islamic sources.

The significant and continuous contributions of Muslim scholars over the centuries show that the Occident inherited Islamic discoveries and thought more than the Greek thought. It was cultural and intellectual globalization imported from the Muslim world into the West for over 1,000 years. As we know, there are many words in the English language today that are derived from Arabic, for instance, algebra, admiral, cipher, amalgam, alcove, coffee, etc., showing the influence of Arabs on Western culture.

Islamic sciences started to decline in the 14th century mainly because of the closing of Ijtihad (free interpretation) that led to freezing of the knowledge

from what was already known.⁸ Proponents of this theory suggested that whatever Muslims ought to know was best understood at the time of revelation and by the companions of the Prophet. Traditionalists believed that new knowledge would lead to innovation, a practice considered haram (forbidden) in Islam. However, there is a Hadith distinguishing between good innovation and bad innovation. Recent Islamic scholars have clarified that innovation in Islam is prohibited in the area of religion and not in the area of sciences. While scientific contributions of Muslims came to a halt for several centuries, there were some philosophical contributions by Islamic thinkers between 14th and 19th centuries, e.g., Shah Waliullah, Sheikh Ahmad Sirhind, Mohammad Iqbal from India, Abd al Wahhab from Arabia, etc. Other factors leading to the downfall of Islamic sciences and civilization are attributed to the colonization of the Muslim world resulting in adoption of Western culture by the elites. A blind imitation of the West resulted in young Muslims losing faith in their own civilization and cultures. Pulled from two different directions they could not fully comprehend or master either civilization. Some Muslim scholars, e.g., Faruqi (1982) also blame the secular education system and secular upbringing combined with a lack of vision that led to the intellectual crisis among the Muslims.

One might ask why it is necessary to explore the contributions of Muslim scholars who lived centuries ago and how such contributions are relevant for the present time. There are in fact, several benefits from this endeavor. Today's Muslims are generally oblivious of the rich legacy of their ancestors whose contributions were generally based on Islamic principles and relevant for all times and places. Most important of all and in majority of the cases, their Islamic knowledge was guided by Divine injunctions and thus believed to be free from human errors. In the area of psychology, we also find that it was the early Muslim scholars who originated many psychological theories and practices prevalent today. While a lot is written about their works, not much is readily available in the English language.

The written accounts on the description of self and human nature given by early Muslim scholars can be found from as early as 800 AD until year 1100 AD.⁹ The author wishes to emphasize that this paper is more of a survey or outline rather than an in-depth study of the contributions of these scholars and should act as a catalyst for further research on the original works of these scholars. It should be noted that the literature on Muslim contributions to psychology is really sparse and scattered. The author has relied primarily on the books on Muslim/Islamic philosophy, monographs written by various researches and translations of relevant materials from Arabic books furnished by author's postgraduate students. While researching the various sources, certain phrases in this paper may have been copied without proper citations—a shortcoming that is entirely the author's own. The year of birth and death of these scholars is given differently in different places. I have relied on the dates given in the *History of Islamic Philosophy* by Nasr and Leaman (1996).

Al Ash'ath Bin Qais Al-Kindi (801–866)

Al Kindi (Latin, Alchendius) from Baghdad is considered as the first Muslim philosopher. He wrote more than 239 titles including books and short treatises. Those related to psychology are: *On Sleep and Dreams*, *First Philosophy*, and *the Eradication of Sorrow*. Kindi explained “Sorrow” as “a spiritual (Nafsani) grief caused by loss of loved ones or personal belongings, or by failure in obtaining what one lusts after.” He then added, “If causes of pain are discernable, the cures can be found (Hamarnah, 1984, p. 362).” Kindi recommended that if we do not tolerate losing or dislike being deprived of what is dear to us, then we should seek after riches in the world of the intellect. In it we should treasure our precious and cherished gains where they can never be dispossessed...for that which is owned by our senses could easily be taken away from us.” He said that sorrow is not within us we bring it upon ourselves. He used cognitive strategies to combat depression and discussed functions of the soul and intellectual operations in human beings. He reminded that the souls through the act of the will develop a good constitution. Commentators of Kindi’s works have indicated that he drew his observations and writings partly from Aristotle, e.g. his writings on *Dreams and Intellect* are taken from Aristotelian and Platonic ideas. Kindi writes in his epistle *On the Soul* that it is basically a synopsis of the larger works of both Aristotle and Plato.¹⁰ He also distinguished between the upper and the lower worlds. While the upper world consists of uncreated beings like the intellect, nature and the soul, the lower world comprises of created beings like Body, Creation, matter and Form that are finite. He mentioned that God cannot be understood by intellect that actually led to “negative theology”.

Ali Ibn Sahl Rabban At-Tabari (838–870)

At-Tabari, a Persian and a Muslim convert, was a pioneer in the field of child development, which he elucidated in his book *Firdaus al Hikmah*. *Firdaus* is basically a medical text that is divided into 7 sections and 30 treatises (360 chapters). Tabari discusses ancient Indian texts in this book and refers to the contributions of Sushtra and Chanakya in relation to medicine including psychotherapy (Hamarnah, 1984). He also emphasized the need for psychotherapy and urged the physicians to be smart and witty to make their patients feel better. People frequently feel sick due to delusive imagination, at-Tabari explained, but the competent doctor can treat them by “wise counseling”. He relates the story of a practitioner who would ask his patient “did you eat grapes or watermelon” during the season of such fruits. Such intuitive questions would win the rapport and confidence of the patient and would lead to a positive therapeutic outcome. At-Tabari emphasized strong ties between psychology and medicine.

Abu Zaid Al-Balkhi (850–934)

Abu Zaid al-Balkhi is probably the first cognitive and medical psychologist who was able to clearly differentiate between neuroses and psychoses, to classify neurotic disorders, and to show in detail how rational and spiritual cognitive therapies can be used to treat each one of his classified disorders. Al-Balkhi classified neuroses into four emotional disorders: fear and anxiety, anger and aggression, sadness and depression, and obsessions. He also compares physical with psychological disorders and showed their interaction in causing psychosomatic disorders. He suggested that just as a healthy person keeps some drugs and First Aid medicines nearby for unexpected physical emergencies, he should also keep healthy thoughts and feelings in his mind for unexpected emotional outbursts. Al-Balkhi said that it is the balance between the mind and body that brings about health and the imbalance will cause sickness. Furthermore, al-Balkhi said that the treatment of a body follows opposite and reciprocal approaches with respect to the imbalance, e.g., fever—cold surface, chill—heat. This approach is called “al-ilaj bi al-did” which is similar to the term “reciprocal inhibition” introduced by Joseph Wolpe in 1969. Al-Balkhi classified depression into three kinds: everyday normal huzn or sadness, which is today known as normal depression, endogenous depression and reactive depression. Endogenous depression originated within the body while reactive depression originated outside the body.

Abu Bakr Mohammad Ibn Zakariya Al-Razi (864–932)

A Persian known as Rhazes in the West, Al-Razi promoted psychotherapy, just like his mentor, al-Tabari. He pointed out that hopeful comments from doctors encouraged patients, made them feel better, and promoted speedier recovery. Al-Razi believed that an unexpected high emotional outburst has a quick curative effect on psychological, psychosomatic and organic disorders.¹¹ He was a master of prognosis and psychosomatic medicine and also anatomy. Al-Razi wrote a treatise on how to measure intelligence, although English translation of this work could not be found. His *Kitab al-Hawi* or *al-Hawi fit-Tibb* is the longest work ever written in Islamic medicine and he was recognized as a medical authority in the West up to the 18th century. In this compendium, Razi compares medical opinions of Greek and Arab scholars with his own and unlike certain other scholars of his time he criticized the works of Hippocrates and Galen, the celebrated Greek scholars. Some of the other works of al-Razi include *Mujarabbat*, a book on hospital experiences, *al-Tibb al-Mansuri*, a book on medicinal healing art, and *al-Tibb al-Ruhani*, where he discusses ways to treat the moral and psychological ills of the human spirit. He wrote that sound medical practice depends on independent thinking and treated soul as a substance and the brain as its

instrument. He also wrote that religious compulsions can be overcome by reason for better mental health.

Abu Nasr Mohammad Ibn Al-Farakh (Al-Farabi) (870–950)

Al Farabi, also known as Alfarabius, Avenasser, or Abynazar was Turkish. He wrote his treatise on Social Psychology, most renowned of which is his Model City. Al Farabi stated that an isolated individual could not achieve all the perfections by himself, without the aid of other individuals. It is the innate disposition of every man to join another human being or other men in the labor he ought to perform. Therefore, to achieve what he can of that perfection, every man needs to stay in the neighborhood of others and associate with them.¹² He also wrote On the Cause of Dreams—Chapter 24 in the Book of Opinions of the people of the Ideal City and made distinction between dream interpretation and the nature and causes of dreams.¹³ Al Farabi also wrote a treatise on the Meanings of the Intellect and the therapeutic effects of music on the soul.¹⁴ Like other Muslim philosophers of his time, al-Farabi wrote commentaries on the Greeks, independent treatises, and refutations on the works of both philosophers and theologians. Many of his treatises on metaphysics are considered the crown of his intellectual works, e.g., Treatise on the Aims of Aristotle's Metaphysics, Bezels of Wisdom, The Book on the One and the Unity, Explanatory remarks on Wisdom, etc.

Abul Hasan Ali Abbas Al-majusi (D. 995)

Al-Majusi known in Europe, as “Haly Abbas” was Persian. His ancestors followed the Zoroastrian religion (majus) and star worship during the early Islamic period. He wrote Al-Kitab Al-Malaki (al-Kamil) or “The Royal Notebook,” which is one of the great classical works of Islamic medicine and has been able to maintain its frame alongside The Canon of Avicenna right through the Middle Ages and into modern times. He was an appointed physician of King Adud-ad-Dawlah when he wrote this book. In this book that was translated into Latin twice and called Liber Regius (later called “The Complete Art of Medicine”), Majusi writes about the entire health field including mental diseases and the brain. Majusi described the anatomy, physiology and diseases of the brain including sleeping sickness, loss of memory, hypochondria, coma, hot and cold meningitis, vertigo epilepsy, love sickness, and hemiplegia. He emphasized preserving health by preventing diseases and natural healing rather than medical treatment or drugs that should come as a last resort. The book comprises of 20 treatises covering entire field of medicine—the first 10 treatises covers theory (399 chapters) and the last 10 covers practice in 644 chapters. Majusi's true belief in Allah is evident in the worship

and styles of expression throughout this compendium. A lot is also covered on doctor–patient relationship, especially the moral aspects of the medical professional. It is also interesting to note the details and importance of research methodology for any good book which is not much different to the modern-day research in the West.

Ikhwan Al-Safa: The Bretheren of Purity (10th century A.D.)

This group of scholars who kept their identities a secret, originated in Basra, Southern Iraq. Their 52 or 53 epistles or Rasa'il containing spiritual and philosophical knowledge became well known by the end of the 10th century. Their works are generally divided into mathematical and natural sciences, psychology, metaphysics, and theology. These scholars drew their knowledge from diverse sources including the Torah and the Gospels, earlier Greek philosophers, astronomy, nature, and other "Divine Books". Consequently, their writing is often called "syncretic". These scholars tried to work out a doctrine that would replace the historical religions as they believed that there is no compulsion in religion. However, they recommended that all men should follow a religion, by which they meant that laws are necessary for a civilized society. Yet they believed that the Qur'an is the final revelation and Muhammad is the Prophet of God. In their epistles, these scholars wrote about soul, the brain, and the process of thinking. They divided the soul into the vegetative, animal, and human (rational) soul. While the vegetative soul works on nutrition, growth and reproduction, the animal soul is concerned with movement and sensation (perception and emotion). The rational soul is restricted to man and possesses the faculty of thinking and talking. They considered brain as the most important organ where higher functions like perception and thought take place; the prevailing belief was that it is the heart that is the master organ. They viewed that the thinking process begins with the five external senses that send the messages through the fine nerves to the brain where actual processing occur in different locations. Their description of the metaphysical origin of life on earth and the fall of the individual soul from the heavens to the earth as well as their reunion with the world soul is most fascinating but outside the scope of this paper.

Abu Ali Ahmad B. Muhammad B. Ya'kub Ibn Miskawayh (941–1030)

Ibn Miskawayh was a thinker who wrote on a wide variety of topics including psychology. However, he is well-known for his works on a system of ethics, especially, the Taharat al-araq ("Purity of Dispositions") also known as Tahdhib al-Akhlaq ("Cultivation of Morals"). In his book al-Fauz al-Asgar ("The Lesser Victory"), Ibn Miskawayh talked about the proof of the existence

of God, of prophethood and of the soul. Regarding development of virtues, he combined Platonic and Aristotelian ideas with a touch of Sufism and considered virtue as perfecting the aspect of soul representing humanity, i.e. reason that distinguishes humans from animals. He suggests that we need to control our emotions and develop traits to restraint ourselves from faults. His arguments on the futility of the fear of death is interesting, as he reminds that like reason itself the soul and morality cannot be taken away. The concept of morality preached by Ibn Miskawayh was closely related to problems with the soul. Ibn Miskawayh introduced what is now known as “self reinforcement” and response cost. Ibn Miskawayh narrated that a Muslim, who feels guilty about doing something pleasurable to his *al-nafs al-ammara*, should learn to punish himself by psychological, physical or spiritual ways such as paying money to the poor, fasting, etc.

Abu ‘Ali Al-Husayn B. ‘Abd Allah Ibn Sina (980–1037)

Ibn Sina, known as Avicenna in the West was from Bukhara. He was known primarily as a philosopher and a physician, but he also contributed in the advancement of all sciences in his time. In the field of psychology, Ibn Sina wrote about mind, its existence, the mind–body relationship, sensation, perception, etc. in his famous book *ash Shifa* (Healing). At the most common level, the influence of the mind on the body can be seen in voluntary movements, i.e., whenever the mind wishes to move the body, the body obeys. The second level of the influence of mind on the body is from emotions and the will. Say for instance, if a plank of wood is placed as a bridge over a chasm, one can hardly creep over it without falling because one only pictures oneself in a possible fall so vividly that the “natural power of limbs accord with it.” Strong emotions can actually destroy the temperament of the individual and lead to death by influencing vegetative functions. On the other hand, a strong soul could create conditions in another person as well—based on this phenomenon, he accepts the reality of hypnosis (*al Wahm al-Amil*). He divided human perceptions into the five external and five internal senses: (a) *sensus communis* or the seat of all senses that integrates sense data into percepts, (b) the imaginative faculty which conserves the perceptual images, (c) the sense of imagination, which acts upon these images by combining and separating them (by intellect in humans) and is therefore the seat of practical intellect, (d) *Wahm* or instinct that perceives qualities like good and bad, love and hate, etc. and it forms the basis of one’s character whether or not influenced by reason, (e) intentions (*ma’ni*) that conserves in memory all these notions. He wrote about the potential intellect (within man) and active intellect (outside man) and that cognition cannot be mechanically produced but involves intuition at every stage. According to him, ordinary human mind is like a mirror upon which a succession of ideas reflects from the active intellect. Before the acquisition of

knowledge that emanates from the active intellect the mirror was rusty but when we think, the mirror is polished and it remains to direct it to the sun (active intellect) so that it could readily reflect light. Ibn Sina also gave psychological explanations of certain somatic illnesses. He considered philosophizing as a way of making “the soul reach perfection”. Ibn Sina always linked the physical and psychological illnesses together. He called melancholia (depression) a type of mood disorder in which the person may become suspicious and develop certain types of phobias. Anger he said heralded the transition of melancholia to mania. He explained that humidity inside the head can contribute to mood disorders. This happens when the amount of breath changes. Happiness increases the breath, which leads to increased moisture inside the brain but if this moisture goes beyond its limits the brain will lose control over its rational thought leading to mental disorders. He also used psychological methods to treat his patients.¹⁵ Ibn Sina also wrote about symptoms and treatment of love sickness (Ishq), nightmare, epilepsy, and weak memory.

Abu Hamid Muhammad Al-Ghazali (1058–1111)

Al-Ghazali was born in Tus, Khurasan, and later died in the same place. He was a philosopher, theologian, jurist, and mystic. While he was a renowned scholar and achieved great respect in Baghdad, he left Baghdad and retired in Damascus. Ghazali traveled in the holy lands and questioned his senses knowing that they could deceive. He is considered the architect of the latter development of Islam. It is said that with al Ghazali, an age came to an end and a new age began.¹⁶ After Ghazali, the voices of different schools were not stilled but a fresh measure of unity and harmony was achieved. Some of his great works include, *Ihya Ulum ad Din* (Revival of the Religious Sciences), *Al-Munqid min ad-Dalal* (the Savior from Error), *Tahafut al-Fhalasifa* (Destruction of the Philosophy), *Kimiya as-Saadah* (Alchemy of Felicity), *Ya Ayyuhal walad* (O Young Man), *Mishkat al-Anwar* (the Niche of the Lights). In all, he wrote about 70 books.

Ghazali's description of human nature centered on discovering the “self”, its ultimate purpose, and causes of its misery and happiness. He described the concept of self by four terms: Qalb, Ruh, Nafs, and Aql, which all signify a spiritual entity. He prefers the term Qalb for self in all his writings. Self has an inherent yearning for an ideal, which it strives to realize and it is endowed with qualities to help realize it. For fulfilling bodily needs the self has motor and sensory motives. Motor motives comprise of propensities and impulses. Propensities are of two types, appetite and anger. Appetite urges hunger, thirst and sexual craving. Anger takes form in rage, indignation, and revenge. Impulse resides in the muscles, nerves and tissues and moves the organs to fulfill the propensities.

Sensory motives (apprehension) include five external, i.e., sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch and five internal motives, i.e., common sense (Hiss Mushtarik)—it synthesizes sensuous impressions carried to the brain while giving meaning to them, imagination (Takhayyul)—enables man to retain image from experience, reflection (Tafakkur)—brings together relevant thoughts and associates or dissociates them as it considers fit; it has no power to create anything new, which is not already present in the mind, recollection (Tadhakkur)—remembers the outer form of objects as in memory; Tadhakkur recollects the meaning, and memory (Hafiza)—impressions received through the senses that are stored in the memory. The internal senses have no special organs but are located in the different regions of the brain. For example, memory is located in the hinder lobe, imagination in the frontal lobe, and reflection in the middle folds of the brain. These inner senses help the person to learn from past experiences and foresee future situations. In *Ihya*, he asserts that animals share all the five internal senses with man. In *Mizan al Amal*, his later work, he clarifies that animals do not possess a well-developed reflective power. Animals think mostly in terms of pictorial ideas in a simple way and are incapable of complex association and dissociation of abstract ideas involved in reflection. The self carries two additional qualities, which distinguishes man from animals enabling man to attain spiritual perfection. These qualities are *Aql* (intellect) and *Irada* (will). Intellect is the fundamental rational faculty, which enables man to generalize and form concepts and gain knowledge. Will in man is different from animal. In man, the will is conditioned by the intellect while in animal; it is conditioned by anger and appetite. All these powers control and regulate the body. The *Qalb* (heart) controls and rules over them. The heart has six powers: appetite, anger, impulse, apprehension, intellect, and will. The last three depends on the other three and differentiates humans from animals. Only humans have all six, animals have first three.

According to Ghazali, knowledge is either innate or acquired. Acquired knowledge is of two kinds: phenomenal (material world) and spiritual (God, soul, etc.). Knowledge can be acquired through imitation, logical reasoning, contemplation and/or intuition. There are four elements in man's nature: The sage (intellect and reason), the pig (lust and gluttony), the dog (anger) and the devil (brute character). The last three rebels against the first and consequently different people have such powers in different proportions.

Ghazali divides *Nafs* into three categories based on the Qur'an: *Nafs Ammarah* (12:53) – that exhorts one to freely indulge in gratifying passions and instigates to do evil. *Nafs Lawammah* (75:2)—the conscience that directs man towards right or wrong, and *Nafs Mutmainnah* (89:27)—a self that reaches the ultimate peace. The soul in the body is compared to the king in his kingdom. The members of one's body and faculties are like the artisans and workers and intellect is like a wise vizier, while desire is a wicked servant, and anger like the police in the city. If the king avails himself of his vizier in his

administration and turns away from the counsel of wicked servant and keeps the servant and the police in their proper places then the affairs of the state are set right. Similarly, the powers of the soul become balanced if it keeps anger under control and makes the intellect dominate desire. A perfect soul has to pass through several stages, i.e., sensuous (man is like a moth, has no memory and beats again and again the candle), imaginative (lower animal), instinctive (higher animal), rational (transcends animal stage and apprehends objects beyond the scope of his senses) and divine (that apprehends reality of spiritual things).

He explained that diseases are of two kinds, physical and spiritual. Spiritual diseases are more dangerous and result from ignorance and deviation from God. The different spiritual diseases are: self-centeredness, addiction to wealth, fame and status, ignorance, cowardice, cruelty, lust, doubt (waswas), malevolence, calumny, envy, deceit, avarice. Ghazali used the therapy of opposites, i.e., use of imagination in pursuing the opposite, e.g., ignorance/learning, hate/love, etc. He described personality as an integration of spiritual and bodily forces. Ghazali believed that closeness to God is equivalent to normality whereas distance from God leads to abnormality.

For Ghazali, man occupies a position midway between animals and angels and his distinguishing quality is knowledge. He can either rise of the level of the angels with the help of knowledge or fall to the levels of animals by letting his anger and lust dominate him. He also emphasized that knowledge of Ilm al Batin is Fard kifayah or incumbent on every person and asked people to do Tazkiya Nafs or purification of self. Good conduct can only develop from within and does not need total destruction of natural propensities.

Abu Bakr Mohammed Bin Yahya Al-Saigh Ibn Bajjah (1095–1138)

Ibn Bajjah or Avempace was from Spain. He based his psychological studies on physics. In his essay on Recognition of the Active Intelligence he explained that it is the most important ability of man and wrote many essays on sensations and imaginations. However, he concluded that knowledge cannot be acquired by senses alone but by Active Intelligence, which is the governing intelligence of nature. He begins his discussion of the soul with the definition that bodies are composed of matter and form and intelligence is the most important part of man—sound knowledge is obtained through intelligence, which alone enables one to attain prosperity and build character. He writes on the unity of the rational soul as the principle of the individual identity, yet, by virtue of its contact with the Active Intelligence “becomes one of those lights that gives glory to God.” His definition of freedom is that when one can think and act rationally and the aim of life should be to seek spiritual knowledge and make contact with Active Intelligence and thus with the Divine.

Ibn Al-Ayn Zarbi (D. 1153)

Born in Ayn Zarbi (Anazarbos), a city southeast of Sicilia, Zarbi moved to Baghdad for education where he was recognized for his healing art. On top of being a physician, he was also acknowledged as in astronomy, astrology, logic, mathematics and natural sciences. Ibn Zarbi wrote seven treatises of which only two are extant. His book on healing art *al-Kafi fit-Tibb* describes physical and mental illnesses and their treatments. On his chapter on brain and mental infirmities the author describes physical basis for intellectual loss, mental confusion, amnesia, restlessness, lethargy, epilepsy, etc. It is important to note that he never referred to influences of evil spirits in his discussions of mental illness—his approach remained objective and free of cultural influences of the time.

Abu Bakar Muhammad Bin Abdul Malik Ibn Tufayl (1110–1185)

Ibn Tufayl or Abubacer came from Spain, served as a court physician and qazi to the Almohad Caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf who took pride in assembling more scholars and thinkers than any other monarch in the Muslim West. Ibn Tufayl wrote two medical treatises and several works on natural philosophy including *Treatment of the Soul*. His philosophical tale gave a unique concept of man as Hayy bin Yaqzam (*The Living, Son of the Awake*), which shows that an individual has enough mystic and philosophical powers, even if he lived on an island, to reach the ultimate truth provided he has the desired aptitude to do so. This book was translated into Latin by Pococke as *Philosophicus Autodidactus* that inspired Daniel Defoe to write *Robinson Crusoe*. The allegory by Ibn Tufayl is actually based on the “Floating Man” thought experiment written by Ibn Sina while he was prisoned in the castle of Fardajan (near Hamadhan) and refers to the Active Intellect through which God communicated His Truth to human beings. In his allegory, Ibn Tufayl tries to show that not only language, culture and even religion may be unnecessary for the development of a perfect mind—they may even cause hindrance in such development. He distinguishes between philosophy and religion by saying that although they take to the same truth, philosophy is not meant for everybody. Religion on the other hand, takes an exoteric approach to understand the existence of God through symbols and the transgressing of religion and philosophy into each other is bound to fail. This argument of course, will not be acceptable to many scholars.

Abu'l Walid Muhamad Bin Ahmad Ibn Rushd (1126–1198)

Ibn Rushd or Averroes was from Spain but established himself in Morocco. He maintained that thought is passive, and abstraction is active. There is

existence of faculty of the mind, which is designed to receive intelligible forms, from the active intellect. This faculty or disposition is referred to as the passive intellect or the imagination, and since it is partially constituted by the body, it perishes with it. For Ibn Rushd, if an individual is to understand something, the active intellect must be connected with his mind in some way. The active intellect is the efficient cause of the forms in the imagination, and is the form of human beings in that it specifies for them as their proper function and production of abstract idea and contemplation. He argues that there are three types of intellect. They are the receiving intellect, the producing intellect, and the produced intellect. The first two of these intellects are eternal, but the third is generable and corruptible in one sense, and eternal in another sense. He believed that we cannot use sensation alone as the object of our thought, but must also employ imagination to detach us sufficiently from the sense data, for objectivity to be possible. In *Fasl al Maqal* (The Decisive Treatise) Ibn Rushd described three-fold hierarchy of learning. The nature of man is on different levels with respect to their path to assent. One of them comes to assent through dialectical argument (*Jadali*). Another comes to assent through demonstration (*Burhan*). The third comes to assent through rhetorical argument (*Khatabi*). He believes that the reason why we received a scripture with both apparent (*zahir*) meaning and the inner meaning (*Batin*) lies in the diversity of peoples' natural capacities and the difference of their innate predisposition with regard to assent. The reason why we have received in scripture texts whose apparent meaning contradict each other is to draw attention of those who are well grounded in science to the interpretation, which reconciles them.

Fakhr Al-Din Muhammad Umar Al Razi (1149/50–1209)

Al-Razi was from Persia. According to him, human soul differs in nature; some are noble, some are mean and debased. Some are kind and tender and some despotic, dominating; some do not like the body and some desire to rule and achieve position. They never deviate from their nature and disposition but by training and caution they may change their manners and habits. Al Razi in his book, *Kitab al Nafs Wa'l Ruh* analyzes the different types of pleasures as sensuous and intellectual and explains their comparative relations with each other. The nature of sensuous pleasure for both man and animals does not constitute the distinctive goal of human bliss of perfection. In fact, al Razi asserts that a careful scrutiny of pleasure would reveal that it consists essentially in the elimination of pain. For instance, the hungrier a man is, the greater is his enjoyment of pleasure of eating. Moreover, the gratification of pleasure is proportionate to the need or desire of the animal. When these needs are satisfied or desires fulfilled, the pleasure actually turns into revulsion, excess of food or sex results not in more pleasure, but in pain. In

addition, the excessive quest for bodily pleasure amount to a repudiation of humanity. Man is not created in order to occupy himself with the satisfaction of his bodily pleasures, but rather to achieve intellectual apprehensions and contemplate the Divine Presence and gaze on the Divine Lights. Human needs and desires are endless, and according to Al Razi, their satisfaction is by definition impossible. Thus, the important matter of this world is not accomplished through constant improvement and fulfillment but rather through abandoning and avoiding them. He concludes that the mental pleasure is noble and perfect than the sensual pleasure and suggests that the excellence and perfection of a man is only realized by means of the science, knowledge, and excellent manners and not by eating, drinking, and mating.

Muhyid-Din Muhammad Ibn Ali (Ibn Arabi) (1164–1240)

Ibn Arabi was born in Murcia (Spain), studied in Lisbob and then moved to Seville where he met his early spiritual masters. He wrote a lot but only about 150 of his works are extant. There seems to be an uncertainty on the exact number of treatises he wrote. It is believed that most of his works were written while he was in Mecca and in Damascus—his style is known to be difficult and ambiguous. In the area of psychology, Ibn Arabi wrote on the theory of soul, perception, the nature of desire, imaginations and dreams. His Sufi interpretation of the heart is that it is an instrument where esoteric knowledge is revealed. Heart is not eh cone-shaped piece of flesh in the chest but it is “connected with it physically as well as spiritually but also different from it.” Heart is the symbol for the rational aspect of Man but not same as intellect—it is part of the “Universal Reason.” The heart has an “inner eye” that can perceive Reality. However, the evil thoughts of the animal soul and needs of the material world can easily blind this “inner eye.” Like Aristotle, Ibn Arabi recognized three elements in Man—body, soul, and the spirit and classified the human soul into three aspects, vegetative, animal, and rational. However, he did not equate the rational soul with the intellect. Human soul for him is a mode of the Universal Soul and spirit a mode of Universal Reason. The spirit is also the rational principle meant for seeking true knowledge. While the vegetative soul seeks food for the organism, the animal soul is a subtle vapor in the physical heart. The rational souls which is eternal is a pure spirit born free of sins but sins accumulate as a result of conflict between rational and animal soul. Intellect is one of the powers of the rational soul that functions during its association with the body. The rational soul is absolutely independent of the body and can exist independently as it did before joining it and will exist after leaving it as in death. He explains that Khayal or imagination is always active, even in sleep resulting in dreams that are an association of images desired by the individual. However, the individual soul may also reveal itself in dreams, although the symbols that must be interpreted correctly.

Contemporary western psychology and the dilemma of muslim psychologists

Any student of modern psychology knows that psychology branched off from philosophy in the late 19th century. The term psychology itself derived from the Greek root word “psych” or soul and “logos” meaning love. So, psychology originally studied soul as its subject matter. Earlier, in the 14th century, psychologia referred to a branch of pneumatology, the study of spiritual beings and substances and in the 16th century, the term anthropologia was coined that branched off into psychologia, the study of human mind and somatologia, the study of human body. In the 18th century, the influence of empiricism and rationalism paved the way for scientific psychology, but it was in 1879 that the first psychology laboratory was established in Germany. The lab’s founder Wilhelm Wundt studied consciousness, i.e., what goes on in our minds. Very soon this view was challenged by the American psychologist John Watson who stated that psychology can become scientific only if it studied observable behavior. The influence of Watson’s behaviorism remained extremely powerful until the 1960s, especially as espoused by Skinner through his operant conditioning procedures. During the 1960s and 70s, the cognitive revolution took place leading to the technological measurements of cognitive events like perception, dreams, memory, etc. Other scientific progress leading to accurate measurement of bodily processes like the heart rate and blood pressure as well as neurological activity in the brain also influenced psychology. In short, psychology became an independent discipline as a result of influences from physiology, psychiatry (e.g., Freud’s psychodynamic perspective), and above all, the influence of the positivists who succeeded in eliminating metaphysical elements from the natural and human sciences.

This process of secularization grossly neglected the moral and spiritual phenomena within man and left it up to the individual to practice religion. Secularization of the social sciences led to the development of theories that are deterministic and leave little or no room for human volition.¹⁷ This concept is contrary to the Islamic theory of human nature where there is substantial room for free will. Muslim social scientists trained in secular education and under the influence of the scientific frame of mind also embraced Western psychology. Badri (1979) points out that “Muslim psychologists have an anxious zeal to be introduced under the prestigious umbrella of the sciences... that led them to accept blindly the theories and practices unsuitable for application (at least in Muslim countries)” (p. 3). Badri also states that due to the absence of the spiritual aspect in studying humans from Western perspective, psychology textbooks and journals are full of contradictory results (p. 16).

It is indeed true that many of the concepts inherent in the Western psychology are atheistic in their philosophy and approach and thus present the biggest dilemma for Muslim psychologists unless human behaviors are examined from an Islamic framework (Achoui, 1998; Ansari, 1992; Haque,

1998, 2002, 2004). Badri believes that Muslim psychologists have often been the biggest defenders and preachers of Western psychology in Muslim countries. This is true despite the fact that most Western theories of human nature are viewed as contradictory, incomplete and confusing by Western psychologists themselves. Let us look at a few comments on contemporary psychology by Western psychologists. Referring to the identity of psychology, Kimble (1984, p. 833) writes that: "Psychology has an identity problem. After more than a century of official existence...there is even debate of our subject matter... Staats and Koch agree that psychology's splintered condition results, at least in part, and probably most importantly, from the existence of sharply polarized opinion about the epistemological underpinnings of psychology. Similarly, Jordan (1995) criticizes psychology by writing that, "There can be no doubt about it; contemporary American scientific psychology is the sterilest of the sterile. Years of arduous labor and the assiduous enterprise of hundreds of professors and thousands of students has yielded precisely nothing...the canard that "psychology is a science" has long outlived its explanatory—away usefulness: the unpleasant and discouraging facts must be faced honestly" (p. 3). Norager (1998) points out that experimental psychology and behaviorism have lived up to the standards of science, but as soon as psychology extend beyond these two positivistic realms, the "repressed past of philosophy and metaphysics immediately returns."

In view of these statements, we can see that modern psychology has not quite lived up to its professional goals of helping individuals understand themselves, the purpose and meaning of life, and how to live in a balanced and constructive manner. Modern psychology makes grave assumptions that human behaviors are observable by the senses and therefore subject to quantification and measurement, while ignoring the transcendental aspect in man. Humanity cannot always be measured in mechanical, materialistic and reductionistic ways. Unlike the natural sciences, psychology studies human behavior and cognitive processes, which include beliefs, attitudes, norms, customs, and religious influences based on transcendental experiences and value systems. Not studying these factors will give only partial picture of the individual. Polkinghorne (1984) writes that the human realm is unique in terms of its:

- Systemic character or contextual relations,
- Unfinished quality, i.e., human realm is in a state of flux and has a developmental history,
- Meaning that is not directly observable, which denotes that we have to accept evidence of a different nature.

Due to these reasons, contemporary psychology presents a serious challenge to Muslim psychologists. Because of its grounding in the secular worldview,

present-day psychology cannot be accepted in its entirety by Muslim psychologists. An effort to understand human behavior will lead Muslim psychologists to adhere to the Islamic perspectives of human nature and this will mean taking them back into the history of their ancestors whose works were based on Islamic framework. Psychologists interested in the Islamic perspective need to work both at the theoretical and practical levels to bring back their own indigenous psychology. At the theoretical level, Muslim psychologists need to identify and clarify their worldview on knowledge in general and develop a deeper insight into the nature and purpose of knowledge. This would entail clarifying Muslim core beliefs and understanding the distinction between secularism and Islam. They also need to redefine the subject matter of psychology from Islamic perspective using the Tawhidic paradigm—this would mean studying “Nafs” (soul), all over again, from a Muslim religious perspective. They also need to develop and expand the theoretical framework for all topics that come within the realm of Islamic psychology. At a more practical level, this would involve collecting materials of early to modern Muslim scholars relevant to psychology including translations from Arabic, French, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu into English for general readership. Perhaps an organization interested in such works should be identified. University grants, endowments and other private funds should be sought for financial support of this activity. They need to form a network of psychologists interested to cooperate in this venture. Muslim psychologists must learn, develop and then teach Islamic psychology in all its comprehensiveness. They need to develop standardized scales for the Muslim population, initiate empirical studies and Islamic ways of treating psychological problems addressing crisis counseling, family counseling, school counseling and marital therapy.

Conclusion

Due to increasing multiculturalism in the West and keen interest in understanding the Muslim communities, it is essential to explore the Islamic perspectives on human nature. Early Muslim scholars' contributions to the field of psychology are introduced in this paper. The dilemmas and challenges faced by Muslim professionals and clients are also covered and recommendations given for follow-up studies. It is hoped that this interest will be shared by mainstream researchers as indigenous psychologies have obvious advantages over western psychology for indigenous cultures.

Notes

1. *Nafs* is the soul and is divided into three kinds (see a description of *Nafs* by Al-Ghazali in this paper). The term *fitrah* is also used interchangeably and refers to human nature. However,

there are differences between *nafs* and *fitrah* that are beyond the scope of this paper. For a detailed description of *fitrah*, see Mohamed (1998). *Qalb* refers to the human psyche that is the prime determiner of human actions. It is like a spiritual substance synonymous with the spiritual self and is the master of the body—the brain simply regulates the bodily functions as a mediate but not as the primary agent. It is the seat of wisdom and intellect. *Ruh* gives life to human beings and the dignity that can exalt his status above the angels. *Aql* generally refers to reason or thinking but is used interchangeably with the other qualities of the *nafs*.

2. For an interesting reading on the definition of philosophy from Islamic perspective, see S.H.Nasr, In *History of Islamic Philosophy*, edited by SH Nasr and O.Leaman, London: Routledge, 1996, 21–26.
3. Refers to the traditions and deeds of the Prophet as recounted by his Companions. *Hadith* are of two kinds: *hadith qudsi* or sacred *hadith* in which God Himself is directing through the Prophet and is considered as complementary revelation, and *hadith sharif* or noble *hadith* in the form of Prophet's own sayings and deeds. The commonly used term *Sunnah* also refers to the deeds of the Prophet.
4. The Prophet said that an understanding and conquest of the self is incumbent upon a Muslim and is considered the greater jihad, and the one who knows oneself knows God meaning that true knowledge of the self would lead one to closeness with the Creator. Another *hadith* states that, "Every portion of knowledge is the lost property of the believer." The Prophet is also known to have said, "On the Day of Judgment, the ink of the scholars and the blood of the religious martyrs will be weighed—and the ink of the scholars will weigh more than the blood of the martyrs". As the early Muslim scholars took these *hadith* seriously, the Islamic sciences developed drastically only a hundred years after the death of the Prophet.
5. The story on the origin of Mutazilites goes like this. While giving a lecture in the mosque in Baghdad, Imam Hasan (d. 110 AH), a great scholar and considered by many as the first Muslim mystic was asked whether the Muslim who committed great sins remained a Muslim or becomes an unbeliever. Imam Hasan's student Wasil bin Ata (d.131 AH) was there and he preempted his teacher by saying that the person is neither a Muslim nor an unbeliever. Since then Wasil Ata separated from Imam Hasan and opened up his new school called Mutazili (those who secede).
6. Concerned with the rationalistic thought of the Mutazilites, the Ashari school gives priority to revelation over reason.
7. A brief list of the early contributions of Muslims is also recorded in a book by Hofmann (2000). Among the significant contributions of Muslims are: Ibn Firnas (died 888)—attributed with the first flying machine, Al Khwarizmi (died 846)—attributed with algebra and algorithm, Al-Razi (864–935)—his medical treatise was used in European universities for centuries, Ibn Sina (98–1037)—medical treatise used in European universities until the early 19th century, Al-Haytham (965–1039)—invented camera obscura, Al-Khayyam (died 1131)—poet and mathematician who reformed the Indian calendar, Ibn Rushd (1126–1198)—left a great impact on West in areas of philosophy and jurisprudence, Ibn Al-Nafis (died 1288)—discovered blood circulation, Ibn Battuta (1304–1368)—globetrotter who reached Timbuktu, Peking and the Volga. Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406)—father of sociology and modern historiography. Many other Muslim scholars, leaders, thinkers, Sufis, scientists, writers, reformers and revolutionists, administrators and statesmen, soldiers, generals, and conquerors, historians, geographers, and explorers are listed with their contributions in a book by Ahmad (1984).
8. The term *ijtihad* means effort and is referred in a *hadith* in which the Prophet asked one of his companions Muaz by what criteria will he administer the regions that were under his control. Muaz replied Qur'an. And then what, said the Prophet. Muaz said Sunnah. And then, the Prophet asked again to which Muaz replied—ijtihad—and the Prophet approved.
9. One of the earliest works is that of Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Sireen (654–728), who was a renowned interpreter of dreams and wrote *Ta'bir al-Ru'ya* and *Muntakhab al-kalam fi tabir al-ahlam*. His book on dreams is divided into 25 sections starting with the etiquette of interpreting dreams to the interpretation of reciting certain *Surahs* of the Qur'an in one's dream. It is important for a layperson to seek assistance from a Muslim scholar (an *Alim*) who could guide in the interpretation of dreams with a proper understanding of the cultural context, etc. It is also important for psychology practitioners to know that Muslim clients would be more accepting of Islamic perspective of dream interpretation than Freudian perspective, which is based primarily on sexual and aggressive instincts. English translations of his works

are readily available today in Muslim countries. Certain *hadith* indicate that dreams consist of three parts. Muslim scholars also recognized three different kinds of dreams: false dreams, patho-genetic dreams, and true dreams. (See M. Wali-ur-Rahman, Al-Farabi and his theory of dreams, *Islamic Culture* 10 (1936) 137–151). Another early Muslim scholar is Abu Uthman Amr Ibn Bahr Al-Basri Al-Jahiz (766–868) who is credited with more than 200 works of which only 30 are extant. Most of his works are on the social organization of ants, animal communication and psychology.

10. See Introduction by Ahmad, F. al-Ahwani, *Kitab al-Kindi ila al-Mutasim bi-Allah fi al-Falasafah al-Ula*, Cairo, Ihya, 1948, p. 46; and al-Kindi, Abu Rida's ed., Vol.1, pp. 272–273 and 293–318.
11. He used the emotion of anger combined with fear to treat Prince Mansur, the governor of ar-Rayy, from a rheumatic and/or psychosomatic condition of pain in his joints and back, which prevented the *Amir* from standing upright or moving freely. No physical therapy of medicine can cure it, so al-Razi decided to use *al-'ilaj al-nafs* (psychotherapy). Al-Razi told Prince Mansur that he needs the fastest horse and a mule. He took Mansur to a Turkish hot bath outside the city where the horse and mule were saddled. The prince loaded the horse with his private things, food and drinks, ready for a planned escape. Unaware of his physician's plot, the prince entered the hot bath unaccompanied by any of his servants. As he fully relaxed in the steamy bath, al-Razi suddenly pulled out a large dagger and shouted angrily at Prince Mansur, reminding him of the insolences of his soldiers who brought Al-Razi by force to treat him. He put up a frightening expression and threatened to kill the prince who had none of his guards to protect him. The prince, in an outburst of mixed emotions of rage and fear, leaped to his feet and ran out to flee with the prince's horse. Later, he wrote to the prince congratulating him on his recovery and explaining why he had intentionally provoked His Highness to this big explosive emotion.
12. A detailed list of Farabi's works is available in Al-Farabi: An Annotated Bibliography, (Pittsburg University Press, 1962). Another Muslim scholar who contributed in the area of social psychology and sociology, although much later, is Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) of Tunisia. His book *Muqaddimah* is a classic on the social psychology of the peoples of Arabia, especially the Bedouins.
13. Al Farabi's Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, trans. M. Mahdi, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. An article by M. Wali-ur-Rahman, Al-Farabi and his theory of dreams (*Islamic Culture*, 10 (1936), 137–51) is also relevant in this regard.
14. It should be noted that Farabi's definition of music was quoted by musicologists until the late 16th century (see H. G. Farmer, "Clues for the Arabian influence on European Musical Theory," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1925), 61–80).
15. A prince from Persia had melancholia and suffered from the delusion that he is a cow...he would low like a cow...crying "Kill me so that a good stew may be made of my flesh," finally, ...he would eat nothing. Ibn Sina was persuaded to the case...first of all he sent the message to the patient asking him to be happy as the butcher was coming to slaughter him... and the sick man rejoiced. When Ibn Sina approached the prince with a knife in his hand he asked where is the cow so I may kill it. The patient lowed like a cow to indicate where he was. By order of the butcher, the patient was also laid on the ground for slaughter. When Ibn Sina approached the patient pretending to slaughter him, he said, the cow is too lean and not ready to be killed. He must be fed properly and I will kill it when it becomes healthy and fat. The patient was offered food which he ate eagerly and gradually gained strength, got rid of his delusion, and was completely cured.
16. Until his time, Islam had been developing in directions that seemed to exclude each other, and yet each one claimed to be the most authentic view of Islam. There existed an intellectual turmoil and differences among Muslim scholars that peaked before the time of Al-Ghazali (1058–1111).
17. The word secular is derived from the Latin root word *saeculum* meaning the present age. Thus, "secular" connotes this world or contemporary times. Secularization refers to rescuing man from the world beyond or a turning away from religious and metaphysical control of man. A distinction must also be made between secular and western. There are many people in the west belonging to different religions and are not secular in their outlook. Even non-religious persons may not agree to all the concepts that secularism has to offer. West also is not totally synonymous with secularism, an error commonly made in academic circles,

especially in the Muslim world. Describing secularists, Nasr (1988) an eminent philosopher of science, says, "...the world is still seen as devoid of a spiritual horizon, not because there is no such horizon present, but because he who views the contemporary landscape in most the man who lives at the rim of the wheel of existence and therefore views all things from the periphery. He remains indifferent to the spokes and completely oblivious of the axis or the Center, which nevertheless remains ever accessible to him through them." (p. 4).

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